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**THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA
AND THE QUEST FOR
IMPROVING REGIONAL STABILITY**

BY

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**THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA AND THE QUEST FOR
IMPROVING REGIONAL STABILITY**

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA AND THE QUEST FOR IMPROVING REGIONAL STABILITY

Introduction

The Balkan peninsula includes that portion of the European continent adjoining Turkey and the historical land routes to the Middle East. Bordered by the Adriatic Sea in the west, by the Black Sea in the east, and by the Aegean and Ionian Seas in the south, the mountainous Balkan peninsula hosts a diversity of countries which, on more than one occasion, have found themselves facing potential international crises. Most recently, Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania have come to comprise a type of involuntary "cordon sanitaire" around their Balkan neighbor, the former Yugoslavia. The former Yugoslavia currently consists of the independent countries of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). The latter includes the republics of Serbia and Montenegro and the autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo.

Regional instability, which has characterized the Balkans for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, has reemerged violently. Many inextricably intertwined factors account for this troublesome condition: historical development, ethnic and nationalistic disputes, religious conflict, serious minority problems, and international meddling and interference. In addition, the region has become a battleground between

forces demanding the creation of new states based upon the principle of self-determination of peoples and of states versus those advocating the inviolability of borders.

The former Yugoslavia embodies all of these factors and disputes and marks the center of gravity for the region's current dangerous posture. Stabilizing the former Yugoslavia would help defuse this historical "powderkeg of Europe." Stability and peace require four conditions. First, the region's nations must agree to coexist. Second, regional states must guarantee their own, and former Yugoslav, minority groups the rights and privileges of international law and agreements. Third, all states must mutually accept each others eventually defined borders. Fourth, newly created states must have viability. Viable states have two major characteristics: they must be willing and able to protect and guarantee their own integrity; and the international community must be willing and able to guarantee their existence.

After introducing background information necessary for understanding the political and cultural dynamics at work in the region and after summarizing the issues contributing to destabilization, I argue that an improved state of stability in the former Yugoslavia can result from a two phased process designed to neutralize these destabilizing forces. During the first phase, all warring parties must cease the fighting and killing. During the second phase, either the European Community (E.C.) or the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (C.S.C.E.), under the aegis of the United Nations, must assist

the regional states in implementing political settlements based on the personal principle of autonomy, also known as national-cultural autonomy or extra-territoriality. The U.N. and either the E.C. or C.S.C.E. must then be prepared to guarantee this settlement for an indefinite period.

I further argue that political settlements which apply the personal principle of autonomy to the former Yugoslavia's multi-ethnic successor states could reduce the reasons for ethno-cultural conflict among the regional ethnic nations. Reducing ethno-cultural conflict is a key to the success of any plan for long term stability. It may also provide the stimulus for reducing the chauvinism and nationalism associated with many ethno-territorial disputes. This benefits both the independent and federative multinational states in the region.

Background

The former Yugoslavia's current problems are not new ones. Rather, they represent a continuing development of historical, religious, and international, political factors which have dominated the region for much of its history.¹

Historical and nationalistic factors are long-standing. The south Slavs (Serbs, Croats, Slovenes) and the non-Slavic Bulgars invaded the Balkan peninsula from Russia between the fourth and seventh centuries. They were not well-received by the area's original inhabitants, the Albanians, Greeks, and Romanians. Conflicts which erupted among

these ethnic groups at that time continue to this day, expressed in the irredentist claims of a number of regional political groups.

Ethnic group religious differences are a millenium old and center around two events. First, in 1054, Christianity split into the western rite and the eastern, Orthodox rite. The Croats and Slovenes remained western; the Serbs, Albanians, Greeks, Macedonians, Montenegrans and Bulgars adopted Orthodoxy. Second, in 1453, the Islamic Ottoman Empire completed its conquest of the Balkans. The Bosnians, Albanians, and Macedonians converted to Islam. Those ethnic groups who remained Christian considered these converts traitors. This attitude persists today, especially among the Serbs.

International involvement in the region, primarily from the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the strongly pro-Slavic Russian Empire, was relatively frequent during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The very divisive 1878 Treaty of Berlin was followed by two Balkan Wars, in 1912 and 1913.² World War I ended with a series of treaties designed to provide a fair solution to the ethno-national and ethno-territorial questions characteristic of the Balkans. Instead these treaties created many more problems than they solved. The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later named Yugoslavia, became one of those problems.

The end of World War II brought Josip Broz (Marshall Tito) to power in Yugoslavia. Tito attempted to create a Yugoslav state and nationality. He supported this attempt by

redrawing his internal borders in such a way as to insure that ethnic groups were well dispersed throughout the Federal Republic. His program of "brotherhood and unity" instilled a surface calm in the region for much of the Cold War period.

Tito died in 1980. The Cold War ended in 1989.

Yugoslavia's overt disintegration began in 1991, although the process had been well underway years before. As early as the Eighth Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) in December 1964, the idea of seriously creating an artificial Yugoslavian nationality was dealt a serious blow. Despite Tito's support for Yugoslav as an alternative to Serb, Croat, Slovene and so on, only 317,124 persons chose to call themselves Yugoslavs in the 1961 census.³ By 1964, the debate over whether the Yugoslav nationality was really an attempt to assimilate the other nationalities, thereby eliminating them, came to a head when, in December 1964, the LCY formally disavowed any assimilationist purpose.⁴ From this point on Yugoslavism as an alternative nationality remained the choice of a very small percentage of the overall population. Sabrina Ramet assesses the significance of this Congress as threefold: first, it legitimated the republics as agents of popular sovereignty; second, it caused the republics to legitimate federalism; third, it laid the basis for future decentralization.⁵

Tito's death in 1980 was only one of a series of occurrences which weakened Yugoslavia and hastened its disintegration. Ramet lists four others: the deepening economic

crisis which became more pronounced after 1979; the eruption of ethnic tension in Kosovo in 1981; the divisiveness of the LCY after Tito's death; and the problem of the very legitimation of the central government after 1980.⁶

The first issue, the deepening economic crisis after 1979, manifested itself in an economy which had become so decentralized after 1965 that the federal government had very little control over economic enterprises, while the republics had considerable control. The republics and the autonomous provinces managed their economies independently and, as a result, cross-boundary economic relationships and a favorable exchange of goods and services failed to develop.⁷ Republics pursued their economic development without much concern for either their fellow republics or for Yugoslavia as a whole.

The northern republics - Slovenia, Croatia, and northern Serbia - were the most industrialized and technologically advanced, which greatly enhanced their economic positions. The southern republics - Macedonia, Montenegro, southern Serbia, including Kosovo - however, were much poorer, relying on more labor-intensive pursuits such as traditional cottage industry, agricultural and pastoral activities. Despite several governmental attempts to provide for a more equitable distribution of wealth within the federal system, these attempts were largely unsuccessful and served only to further the animosity which had developed between the richer republics and their poorer neighbors.

In addition to this geo-economic disparity, the Yugoslav economy suffered from a number of other ills especially during the 1980's. These ills included a scarcity of foreign exchange and a poorly developed export economy, an ever-increasing inflation rate which reached 1950% by 1989, declining living standards, increasing foreign debt, and high unemployment.⁸

Governmental attempts to deal with these problems were largely unsuccessful. In 1983 the government's Krajgher Commission released its Long-Term Economic Stabilization Program which called for a reorientation and reprioritization of the economy. The Federal Assembly passed only eight of the Program's twenty-five major proposals, which led to more inter-republican bickering and a delay of meaningful reform.⁹ In December 1989 the Markovic government presented a twenty-four law reform package designed to introduce a "united market economy" which was compatible with the existing self-management system.¹⁰ The program was well-received and had immediate positive impact. Inflation dropped to zero, both imports and exports increased, foreign exchange and investment by foreign concerns increased. Unfortunately these reforms had come too late to stop Yugoslavia's slide toward disintegration.

The second issue concerns the significance of the eruption of ethnic tensions between the Serbs and the Albanian majority in Kosovo. Approximately one-third of all Albanians live in the former Yugoslavia, and 1.2 million of them live in Kosovo. Serbo-Albanian tension pre-dates World War II. Often this tension has been expressed by riots in Kosovo (1968), by

Albanian separatist propaganda drives (1973-75), Albanian nationalist demonstrations in Kosovar cities (1974-79), and a violent series of riots and demonstrations throughout Kosovo (March and April 1981). The latter incidents, resulting from the arrest, trial and imprisonment of a number of Albanian separatists in Kosovo, inspired a series of violent nationalistic demonstrations and riots which caused considerable damage and yet more arrests. By the end of summer, 1981, Kosovo had been placed under a virtual state of siege by more than 30,000 troops and police from throughout Yugoslavia.

The Kosovo riots of 1981 resulted in a migration of Kosovar Serbs and Montenegrans out of Kosovo, caused nationalist backlashes among Macedonians and Serbs against the Albanians, and set the stage for more and more overt expressions of nationalist discontent throughout the other federal republics.¹¹

The divisiveness among the League of Communists of Yugoslavia after 1980 also hastened Yugoslavia's demise. Through the 1980's, the LCY remained the sole political party in Yugoslavia. Numbering two million members, the LCY provided all government officials at the national and republic level and also provided a large percentage at the local level.¹² During the 1980's, however, the LCY essentially had become a complimentary body to the collective presidency. Tito had held the party together. He was its leader, its ultimate arbiter. When he died, the party lost its cohesive factor and began to weaken.

The LCY became more and more an elitist avenue for success, less and less a definer and overseer of the Yugoslav ideology and *raison d'etre*.¹³ Rather, groups within the LCY, especially at the republic and province level, became the foci for formulating and expressing official stands on economic and political issues.¹⁴ However, even as it became obvious, especially among the republics, that structural change was needed at the national level, those LCY members at the national level were less and less likely or able to effect any structural change which might alter their elite positions. By 1990, the national LCY had ceased to be a significant political organization.

The decentralization and the devolution of power which cut at the very legitimation of the central government after 1980 began even before Tito's death. The 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, for example, gave the constituent republics a wide range of political, cultural, and administrative autonomy. By 1979, the republics were even conducting their own foreign relations through their own Bureau's of Foreign Relations and Coordinating Commissions for Economic Relations Abroad.¹⁵ As the republics grew stronger, the federal center grew weaker.

The growing spectre of disintegration became reality after Slobodan Milosevic's ascension to power in Serbia in 1987. Milosevic coupled his dynamic personality with the energy of populist style street demonstrations and rallies to pursue his political goals. These goals included reversing the trends toward decentralization and devolution of power, strengthening

the central (i.e. Serbian) government at the expense of the republics, and reducing the status of the autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina. This program had major negative effects within Yugoslavia. These effects were a powerful anti-Serbian reaction, an arousal and merging of predemocracy and proconfederation sentiments, and an acceleration of Bosnia's pursuit of political pluralism.¹⁶

In January 1990 Slovenia and Croatia called for the institution of a multiparty system and a loose confederative government. During April-May 1990, free elections in both Croatia and Slovenia brought nationalist-oriented leaderships to power. Serbia reacted by supporting the Croatian Serb establishment of the Serbian Autonomous Region of Krajina within Croatia's boundaries, and by calling once again for a strong federation in Yugoslavia. Civil War broke out in January 1991. On 25 June Croatia and Slovenia voted for independence, followed by a similar vote in Macedonia on 9 September and in Bosnia-Herzegovina on 29 February 1992. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia had disintegrated.

The combination of these factors - a growing economic crisis, developing ethnic tensions in Kosovo, LCY party divisiveness, republican strength vis-a-vis central government weakness coupled with Milosevic's ascendancy to power - had immersed the former Yugoslavia in the turbulent waters of nationalistic, ethnic, cultural, religious, and territorial conflict.

Destabilizing Issues

The former Yugoslavia is dotted with geographic areas with near crises and active crises which must be resolved in order to improve overall regional stability. The most immediate crisis is, of course, Bosnia-Herzegovina, where death, destruction, "ethnic cleansing" and trauma occur on a regular basis. The Republic of Croatia has two crises areas within its borders: active fighting against Croatian Serbs in the Krajina, and a tenuous cease-fire in its provinces of eastern and western Slavonia. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, while thus far averting active warfare within its borders, faces several crises which could turn violent at any time: the Sandzak; the Vojvodina; and Kosovo. Finally the issue of Macedonia's independence threatens to evolve into a general Balkan war.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Tito created the artificial state of Bosnia-Herzegovina as an administrative buffer between Croatia and Serbia in a manner that prevented any one nationality from attaining a definitive majority. Bosnian population figures for 1991 reveal the success of Tito's policy: 43.8% were Muslims, 31.5% Serbs, 17.3% Croats, 7% declared Yugoslavs.¹⁷ More revealing is the fact that Muslims constituted a majority in 32 of Bosnia's districts; the Serbs, a majority in 31 districts; the Croats, in 14 districts, with 23 districts having no majority.¹⁸ In no case were any of the three ethnic groups homogeneously or

contiguously situated. In general, however, Croats settled adjacent to Croatia in western Hercegovina and northeastern Bosnia. Serbs settled largely in the western and northwestern part of the state, closer to Croatia than Serbia. Muslims lived essentially in the central and eastern portion of Bosnia.

The original issue in Bosnia was, simply, whether Bosnia should survive as an independent state. When Bosnia conducted its referendum for independence on 29 February-1 March 1992, a majority of the Muslims and Croats voted for independence while the Serbs, who preferred merging with Serbia proper, boycotted the referendum. Even before Bosnia could demonstrate that it was, or was not, willing and able to maintain its own integrity, the United Nations recognized Bosnian independence. This action granted *de facto* international recognition to Bosnia's right to statehood, but also triggered a chain of events which included stimulating the fears of the Bosnian Serbs, who then began fighting, which then led to an ever-widening and vicious war.

With independence secured, attention has shifted to the political structure which will best insure Bosnia's survival. This is not a simple question. Each of the warring factions has specific goals. The Bosnian Muslims, who were only accorded the status of an ethnic group or nation in 1970, had been satisfied with the live and let live policy of the old Yugoslav federation. Fearing the Serbian nationalist ascendancy to power in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Bosnians hoped their independence would lead to the creation of a "democratic,

secular, and decentralized state" composed of constituent regions built around towns or cities.¹⁹

The President of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic, recently called for Bosnia to be a normal, European state where: all ethnic groups will have equal rights; each will decide directly on their own affairs and will take part in managing the joint state; decision-making will be through consensus.²⁰

Izetbegovic's position has undergone considerable evolution since the 1991 independence referendum through which he had hoped to establish an independent Bosnia-Herzegovina with a strong central government ruled by a multi-ethnic coalition, of which the Muslims would be the largest and, therefore strongest, group.²¹ Izetbegovic admits that their referendum for independence may have contributed to the start of the war. The Bosnians had two choices: either remain a part of the rump Yugoslavia or proclaim Bosnia an independent state. "I am sure that we could have not escaped from this fate [i.e. war] when we decided for independence. We could have possibly avoided it if we had remained in Yugoslavia."²²

In a television interview in Sarajevo on 13 February 1993, Izetbegovic outlined his current vision of a "civic state" for Bosnia where regions are "based on economic principles," and which "will respect ethnic and human rights."²³ Rebuilding the Bosnian economy is his key to creating viability as a civic state. "Economy has no ethnic

prejudice. It is based on interest and it would help the state against the centrifugal forces trying to split the state," he argues.²⁴

The centrifugal forces are, of course, the Bosnian Serbs and Croats, whose goal is to establish "para-states" within Bosnia. Izetbegovic now hopes to use his political and economic model for a civic state as a means to help Bosnia succeed as a viable state, thereby eliminating the need for para-states. "One day," says Izetbegovic, "we will say that we are Bosnians, in the sense that we are citizens of the Bosnian state. This does not mean we will give up our Croatian, Serbian, or Muslim identity."²⁵ It means, as Bosnian Foreign Minister Haris Silajdzic stated, that they will establish a decentralized state which allows a high degree of autonomy for its provinces, provinces which should be administratively, not ethnically or religiously, based.²⁶

The Bosnian Croats have consistently had considerable difficulty seeing the Bosnian Muslims as anything more than Croats who have accepted an artificially created nationality. In fact Croats view their Islamic brethren as religious heretics who can be repatriated and saved by baptism and returned to the Christian faith.²⁷ The Bosnian Croats would like to join the Croatian districts of Bosnia to Croatia. Between November 1991 and January 1992, the Croats went so far as to organize the three major Bosnian Croat population centers into political, economic, cultural, and territorial entities under the name of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosnia.

The Croatian Croats support an independent Bosnian state, however, not in the same terms as those of Izetbegovic. Croat President Franjo Tudjman favors a confederal or cantonal plan for Bosnia in which its political and territorial sovereignty would be linked to a guarantee of dual citizenship for Bosnian Croats as both Bosnian and Croat citizens. In fact Tudjman has stated that Bosnia simply will not survive unless all three nationalities agree to a plan which guarantees complete equality to all citizens.²⁸ Mate Boban, President of the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosnia, further states that Croatian political demands and goals are no different than those of other nationalities and that all groups in Bosnia must have their own space in which the legal authority would be established proportionally, according to the principle of national representation.²⁹

In a Zagreb television interview, Boban stated: "...we want Bosnia-Hercegovina as an independent country within its existing borders while within it the Croatian people are to have their own rights in a cultural, economic, political, and any other sense, so they can be a people with all those trappings of sovereignty that every other people has."³⁰ Furthermore, a poll conducted in Croatia by the publication Slobodna Dalmacija in late August and early September found that, in answer to a question about what the future structure of Bosnia should be, 63% responded that Bosnia should remain intact, 11.5% said that it should be cantonized, 6.5% said it should be divided, and 19% had no opinion.³¹

The Bosnian Serbs opposed independence and still favor unification with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Like the Croats, the Serbs also have difficulty dealing with the Muslims as a national group. Serbs consider Bosnian Muslims actually to be Serbs. Unlike the Croats, the Serbs see Bosnian Muslims as traitors, having sold out their Christianity to Islam under the Ottoman Empire in order to save their land.³² On 7 April 1992 the Bosnian Serbs declared the creation of the independent Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, consisting of about two thirds of Bosnia's territory. While unification with Serbia remains the goal of many Bosnian Serbs, their president, Radovan Karadzic, has stated that a Bosnia composed of three equal, autonomous ethnic communities set up in such a way that one could not be dominated by the other two is the only workable principle around which to form a Bosnian state.³³ Karadzic favors a confederated Bosnian state consisting of three constituent states, created voluntarily by the people and composed of communes based on the "principle of the ethnic pattern of the peoples in inhabited places, which is the only right way."³⁴

The lack of a definitive majority ethnic group in Bosnia as a whole and the widespread intermingling of the ethnic groups down to the local level throughout the state make a territorial solution to the Bosnian crisis unrealistic. Bosnia simply cannot be divided very cleanly into three autonomous

ethnic territories which the Serbs favor. Nor can Bosnia be divided into ten mini-Bosnia's, which the E.C. plan developed by Cyrus Vance and Lord David Owen favors.

The Vance-Owen peace plan consists of essentially three parts: first, an agreement by all parties that no states will be created within the state of Bosnia; second, that Bosnia will be divided into ten semiautonomous provinces in which the rights of all ethnic groups would be respected; third, Bosnia will receive a new constitution which must "take into account the existence of three main ethnic groups," which will establish borders that "could not be changed without a significant majority of the legislative body," and which allocates to the state the functions of foreign affairs, defense, international trade, citizenship, and taxes for financing the central government.³⁵

While the first part of the plan has been accepted by all of the parties, the remaining two have not. The issue of the ten provinces or enclaves is the most contentious issue. The combined problem of each ethnic group constituting a majority in at least three provinces each, coupled with the artificiality of the provincial borders, which some have interpreted as rewarding the Serb policy of ethnic cleansing, have stalled the plan's acceptance.

Also stalling the proceedings are the callous disregard which the Serbs have shown for the many ceasefire proposals which have been attempted over the past twelve months; the indiscriminate artillery bombardment of Sarajevo and numerous

other Bosnian cities and towns; the current Serbian offensive against the town of Srebrenica, one of the last areas held by Bosnian government forces in eastern Bosnia; the calculated Serbian attacks on humanitarian assistance convoys; and the countless Serbian offensives against Muslims and Croats in Bosnia, and against Croats in the Krajina and East and West Slavonia.

While a ray of hope appeared on Sunday, 28 March 1993, when Bosnian Serbs agreed to yet another ceasefire and gave some positive indications of accepting the Vance-Owen plan, it is more likely that this will become only one more in a long list of Serbian delaying tactics designed to relieve some of the international pressures being applied to all Serbs.

Croatia: the Krajina and eastern and western Slavonia

Serbian and Croatian distrust and hatred of each other is not a new phenomenon. The atrocities which each committed against the other during World War II remain vivid images in the minds of both the survivors and their offspring. It is not difficult, then, to imagine what Croatian Serbs were feeling when Croatia enacted several changes to the Croat constitution in 1990. Referring to Croatia as "the sovereign state of Croatia and other nations living in Croatia," the constitution no longer recognized the Serbs as a distinct group, even though they comprised 12.2% of the population.³⁶ This new Constitution affirmed the "historical right of the Croatian

nation to full state sovereignty" and expressed a "determination to establish the Republic of Croatia as a sovereign state."³⁷

Serbs were quick to realize their minority status and reacted to what they believed as impending political, cultural and economic discrimination under a political system which Robert M. Hayden, an anthropologist at the University of Pittsburgh, calls constitutional nationalism. Constitutional nationalism is "a constitutional and legal structure that privileges the members of one ethnically defined nation over other residents in a particular state."³⁸

Even before Croatia declared its independence on 25 June 1991, the Croatian Serbs living in eleven districts located between Bosnia and the Adriatic Sea conducted a referendum and voted the autonomous province of Krajina into existence. The Serbs comprised a majority in this region. In March 1991 Krajina proclaimed itself part of Serbia. Serbs living north of Bosnia and south of Hungary in eastern and western Slavonia likewise seceded and declared their independence.

The international community refuses to accept either the secession and independence of these regions or their possible unification with Serbia. U.N. peacekeeping forces currently patrol Slavonia, which has been designated, on an interim basis, as a U.N. Protected Area. According to Krajina's similar status, Lord Carrington, however, made the international community's position very clear: "...independence for the Krajina is not an option: self-determination is at the level of

republics, not peoples. The only valid settlement, therefore, is one which respects the territorial integrity of Croatia."³⁹ During the last week of January 1993 open warfare broke out once again in the Krajina. Each side blamed the other for the resumption of hostilities.

FRY: the Sandzak, the Vojvodina, and Kosovo

Slobodan Milosevic rose to power in Serbia in 1987 on a nationalist platform which embodied three goals, according to Sabrina Ramet: first, the elimination of all autonomous provinces and their annexation by Serbia; second, the recentralization of the government at the expense of the autonomous provinces and the republics; third, the rehabilitation of the Orthodox church to serve as a vehicle for Serbian nationalism.⁴⁰ Simply stated, Milosevic harnessed the power of Serbian nationalism, which he strengthened with a revitalized Serbian Orthodox Church, and initiated a program designed to reduce the status enjoyed by the autonomous provinces of Kosovo and the Vojvodina and to reclaim from the republics the federal power which the central government had given up progressively since before Tito's death. Milosevic intended to make Serbia the new federal center.

Between 1987 and his reelection as president of Serbia in December 1990, Milosevic accomplished much of his program. The constitutions of Serbia, Vojvodina, and Kosovo, for example, had been changed to such a degree that neither Vojvodina nor Kosovo has much autonomy left. Both were subordinated to the Serbian legislative and judicial systems.⁴¹ Serbia granted

the Serbian Orthodox church permission to restore many of its older churches and to build new ones.⁴² Milosevic placed a greater emphasis on the cyrillic alphabet and increased its usage at the expense of the Latin alphabet.⁴³ These actions resulted in growing dissatisfaction among the non-Serbian ethnic minorities living in regions throughout the FRY.

The Sandzak, a Muslim province which straddles the border of Serbia and Montenegro and connects Bosnia to Kosovo, is one such region. The Sandzak is important to Serbia for two reasons: first, it links Serbia to Montenegro, thus providing Serbia with its only route to the Adriatic; second, if it were independent, it would geopolitically link Bosnia, Kosovo, Albania, and Macedonia.⁴⁴ Muslims account for more than half of the Sandzak's population. Over 60% of the population of the Serbian municipalities and over 40% of the population of the Montenegrin population are Muslims.⁴⁵

The Sandzak Muslims want autonomy. Between 25-27 October 1991, 70% of the eligible voters, mostly from the Serbian municipalities where dissatisfaction with Serbia ran high, went to the polls and 98.9% of them voted for autonomy.⁴⁶ Serbia declared the referendum unconstitutional and has made it clear that it will never allow Sandzak autonomy. The Muslims have vowed to continue their efforts.

The Vojvodina province is located in northern Serbia and borders Hungary. It is a multi-ethnic province which is home to Serbs, Hungarians, Croats, Romanians, Slovaks, Ruthenians and Ukrainians. The Vojvodina contains three areas which belonged to

Hungary until the end of WWI: the Banat, the Baranya, and the Bacska. These areas are home for approximately 450,000 ethnic Hungarians who are actively seeking autonomy. The Democratic Community of Vojvodina Hungarians, VDMK, reacted to Serbia's elimination of Vojvodina's former autonomous status by demanding cultural autonomy. This status includes equal participation in the political process, adequate representation in the administrative and judicial processes, and the use of Hungarian in education.⁴⁷ The call for autonomy for Vojvodina as a whole, and for the Hungarians living in the Bacska which came in April 1992, was promptly rejected by Serbia.

The minorities of the Vojvodina also strongly object to Serbia's blatant Serbianization policy in their region. As a result of the war in Bosnia and Croatia, over 500,000 refugees have migrated into Serbia, over 80% of whom were Serbs. Beginning in April 1992, Serbia sent 62,000 of them to the Vojvodina where they displaced legal residents.⁴⁸ The effect of Serbianization has been a negative population transfer of non-Serbian minorities who are forced to flee their homes to the nearest safe haven, in most cases Hungary.

Kosovo is the third region which could prove to be Serbia's most difficult problem. Kosovo's population is 90% Albanian. Kosovo is also a very important part of Serbia's history, the site of the famous battle of Kosovo-Polje. Serbia has sworn that it will never allow Kosovo to be non-Serb. Without massive Serbian support, however, the Serbian minority in Kosovo is no match for the Albanian Kosovar majority.

Slobodan Milosevic came to power on a pledge to end Kosovar autonomy. He achieved that and more. Since 1987, Milosevic has engaged in a Serbianization program in Kosovo which, in addition to eroding Kosovo's political autonomy, has denied the Kosovo Albanians basic cultural and educational rights and has replaced thousands of professionals, factory managers, and other officials with Serbs.⁴⁹ Serbs even replaced Albanian street names with Serbian names in the cyrillic alphabet. Two recent laws have hit the Kosovar economy particularly hard, forcing the unemployment of over 100,000 Albanian Kosovars and "plundering and ruining the Kosovar economy through a Serbianization of local industries and companies."⁵⁰

In September 1991 Albanian Kosovars responded with a referendum in which they voted overwhelmingly for an independent state. In May 1992 they elected an independent Parliament and a president, Ibrahim Rugova. The Albanian Kosovars have set up a virtual underground counterculture consisting of their own government, schools, hospitals, and services. In an early 1991 survey conducted in the Albanian language newspaper, Zeri I Rinisi, more than 50% of Albanian Kosovars hoped for annexation by Albania, while only 7% saw any point in negotiating with the Serbs.⁵¹ Clearly any settlement of the Kosovo issue will require a considerable reversal in current Serbian policies.

Macedonia

Macedonia may be the most complex and volatile of all of former Yugoslavia's impending crises where, as Robert Kaplan writes, "any epilogue to a breakup of Yugoslavia will be written."⁵² This epilogue may reflect disaster, or, as we will see later, it may reflect a possible solution to the former Yugoslav question.

Macedonia is an anomaly. Its name is thousands of years old, yet the nation of Macedonia can trace its legitimate existence and foreign recognition only to 1944, when Yugoslav and Bulgarian communists recognized Macedonians as a separate nationality. Tito later promoted the idea of a separate Macedonian cultural and linguistic identity in order to separate Macedonians from Bulgaria. Many experts, however, consider Macedonians to be western Bulgarians; and of course the Serbs consider them to be southern Serbs.

Macedonia's population is so diverse that it resembles the former Yugoslavia in microcosm. According to the 1981 census, 67% of the population was Macedonian; 20%, Albanian; 4%, Turks; 4%, Serb; 2%, Pomak; 2%, Gypsies; less than 1% Vlachs (Greeks) and Bulgarians.⁵³ Current figures reflect increases in both the Albanian and Serb populations at the Macedonian's expense. While the Macedonian Orthodox Church services most of the population, approximately 6% of the population is Muslim.⁵⁴

Because of this diverse population, Macedonia's neighbors have vested interests in her internal affairs, especially her treatment of minority groups. For example, Albanian foreign

minister Alfred Sereqi recently stated that Macedonia must provide a constitutional guarantee for respecting the rights of Albanians living in Macedonia.⁵⁵ Serbian nationalists consider Macedonia to be south Serbia and ultimately a future addition to Milosevic's Greater Serbia. Serbia, however, does not currently possess the power to force the issue. It is interesting that the Serbs in Macedonia are pushing for the very cultural rights - education in the mother tongue, respect for national identity, religious freedom, Serbian language radio and TV broadcasts - that Milosevic has systematically denied to non-Serbian minorities in the FRY.⁵⁶

Macedonia declared its independence on 22 November 1991. To date only six states have recognized her.⁵⁷ The primary reason for the lack of recognition is Macedonia's chosen name and Greek objections to it. Greece claims exclusive rights to the name and considers Macedonia's usage of it an indicator of future territorial expansionism and the legitimization of a false nationality.⁵⁸ Despite the fact that Macedonia meets all European Community criteria for recognition as a legitimate state, the E.C. has chosen to support Greece. Continued international failure to recognize Macedonia as an independent state could lead to further confrontation among Macedonia and any of a number of combinations of its neighbors. Bulgarian Prime Minister Berov, however, recently stated that Bulgaria was preparing to sign a joint statement with Greece, Turkey and Romania which will reject any division of Macedonia into three or four parts.⁵⁹ The Macedonian issue is now before the

United Nations, where many see Macedonian recognition as an important part of a policy to contain Serb expansionism.

The discussion of destabilizing issues above suggests a number of facts which have important implications for the discussion to follow. First, all of the former Yugoslavia's ethnic groups cherish their cultures and will resist attempts by a majority ethnic group to acculturate or assimilate them. The most important cultural identities are the right to practice one's language, to operate one's own schools, to preserve and display one's ethnic and national identity, to practice one's religion, and to process information in one's own language. Those ethnic groups whose cultural autonomy has been stripped away want it back.

Second, those groups which have bettered their political posture by independence (Slovenia, Croatia) will never give it up. If their independence is threatened (Bosnia-Herzegovina), they want the threat stopped. If their independence has not been recognized (Macedonia), they want recognition as soon as possible. If they once enjoyed political autonomy (the Vojvodina, Kosovo) they either want it back or they want to secede from the state.

Third, none of the new states have overt territorial designs on their new neighbors except for Serbia. That is not to say that there are not irredentist movements in the region. Some Macedonians, for example talk of a greater Macedonia. Some

Hungarians would like to reunite the Vojvodina with Hungary. And many Albanians have openly talked of annexing Kosovo. Only Serbia, however, has acted out its territorial designs.

Any long term solution to the stability question in the former Yugoslavia must address the cultural, political, and the territorial desires of the region's nations. That, however, cannot take place until the fighting has stopped.

Restoring Short Term Stability: Ending the Violence

Four scenarios offer opportunities to end the fighting in the two active crises, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Krajina. The first scenario envisions Serbia's unimpeded pursuit of a greater Serbian state and its imposition of peace. The second scenario involves the unilateral intervention of a great power willing and able to impose a peace settlement. The third scenario envisions multinational intervention, sanctioned by the U.N., the E.C., or the C.S.C.E., which will force a cessation of hostilities. The fourth scenario involves an intensive negotiation process concurrent with the fighting determined to persuade all parties to stop hostilities. Each scenario's end-state - i.e. a cessation of hostilities - poses distinct risks for the attainment of the ultimate goal of long term regional stability.

In the first scenario, Serbian nationalism continues on its course to unite every Serb and every piece of their land with Serbia proper. Before the 1990 elections in Serbia,

Slobodan Milosevic stated: "All Serbs in one state."⁶⁰ Serbian nationalists envision this state to include all of Serbia and Montenegro, most of Bosnia, a large piece of Croatia, all of Kosovo and the Vojvodina, and a percentage of Macedonia. Milosevic's plan for "modern federalism" would then allow Serbia to capitalize on the enhanced political influence derived from uniting all of the former Yugoslavia's dispersed Serbs into a single state.⁶¹

As of 22 March 1993, the Serbs have been fairly successful in accomplishing their goal. They have repealed the autonomy of the Vojvodina and Kosovo and have begun serious Serbianization programs in each area. Bosnian Serbs continue to hold about two-thirds of Bosnia in their unrecognized Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Hercegovina. Croatia has recently attacked Serbian elements in their Krajina provinces, but the Serbs still lay claim to at least two-thirds of that area. Contested eastern and western Slavonia regions of Croatia remain under U.N. special status, but with a Serbian presence. Serbian activity in Macedonia is intensifying. Milos Vasic, editor of Belgrade's *Vreme* magazine, recently told columnist Georgie Anne Geyer that the Serbs have formed the Serbian Democratic Party there and appear to be "arousing the Serb population in the northwestern province of Macedonia."⁶²

Any hope for a moderation of the Serbian nationalist position ended, at least for the near future, with the defeat of Milan Panic in the Serbian presidential elections on 20 December 1992. Despite claims that illegalities marked the

balloting process and the vote count, Milosevic retained the presidency. More importantly, Vojislav Seselj, leader of the Serbian Radical Party, won nearly 25% of the vote and now controls over one third of the parliament's seats. The Radical Party has become the second largest party in Serbia. Seselj is a violent ultra-nationalist and open supporter of a greater Serbia. He advocates the ethnic cleansing of non-Serbs who live in Serbia, the population transfer of 360,000 ethnic Albanians out of Kosovo, and the provision of aid to the victimized Serb minority in Macedonia.⁶³,

If Serbia continues unimpeded, it appears likely it will accomplish its goal of a greater Serbia. Should this happen, there is little likelihood that ethnic minorities will fare very well. Population displacement followed by the Serbianization of ethnically-cleansed land would surely continue. So too would the threat of renewed warfare, as soon as displaced ethnic groups became strong enough to reassert themselves. The Croats are doing just that in the Krajina. The end state envisioned under the greater Serbian state scenario, therefore, is so risky that it provides little encouragement for either short term or long term satisfaction of the previously defined criteria for stability: peaceful coexistence; minority rights; and mutually acceptable borders.

What about the unilateral intervention by a great power sufficiently strong enough to forcefully stop the fighting? In this second scenario, only a handful of countries even have that capability. Russia, Great Britain, France, and the United

States arguably have the resources to undertake unilateral action. None of these countries has expressed a serious desire to do so. Both Russia and France have rattled their sabers, threatening unilateral intervention as 1992 transitioned to 1993, but their bellicose statements were quickly withdrawn. Great Britain ruled out the unilateral option when it committed a sizeable force to the U.N. humanitarian effort in Bosnia.

The United States, then, is the only great power which could exercise the unilateral option. As his administration drew to a close, President George Bush sent a letter to Milosevic stating: " In the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action, the United States will be prepared to employ military force against the Serbians in Kosovo and Serbia proper."⁶⁴

But would the United States proceed unilaterally? In a CRS Report for Congress entitled Balkan Battlegrounds: U.S. Military Alternatives, John M. Collins lists fifteen objectives which a U.S. Bosnian policy should be prepared to accomplish.⁶⁵ Collins then lists and discusses eight courses of action which the United States could take: Withdraw; Status Quo; Peacekeeping; Humanitarian Assistance; Battlefield Isolation; Punitive Raids; Peace Enforcement; and Rollback.⁶⁶ Of these possible courses of action, only one lends itself to unilateral U.S. action: Punitive Raids. This course of action envisions the aerial bombardment of high value military and industrial targets inside Serbia in order to deter or diminish Serbia's ability to wage war against its neighbors and simply

to punish Serbia for its uncivilized behavior. Weapons employed would include aircraft, cruise and tomahawk missiles, psychological operations and other measures short of ground troops.

It is highly doubtful, however, that the United States would undertake this, or any other, course of action without the approval and cooperation of the United Nations. In fact, Secretary of State Warren Christopher's announcement of the Clinton administration's Bosnian policy on 10 February 1993 made this quite clear. In addition, unilateral action is risky for several reasons. First, it would endanger the lives of the U.N. soldiers currently in the former Yugoslavia who are performing either humanitarian or U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) missions. Second, there is no guarantee that punitive raids or other unilateral actions will force the Serbs to react in the desired manner. Such action may actually strengthen their resolve. Third, it may sabotage any ongoing peace negotiations and undo any progress made up to that point. While unilateral action could contribute to the short term goal of a cessation of hostilities, it is doubtful that great power unilateral intervention would be able to "bomb" the warring parties to the negotiating table.

The third scenario envisions a multinational force, under the aegis of the U.N., the E.C., or the C.S.C.E., militarily intervening in the former Yugoslavia to end the fighting. The method for military intervention may be either indirect or direct.

The indirect method of multinational intervention includes implementation of those steps short of the commitment of ground combat forces. Doctor Michael Roskin, Professor of Political Science at the U.S. Army War College, recently proposed an indirect approach designed to contain Serbia with minimum cost while encouraging European solidarity for dealing with future ethnic conflicts. Roskin suggests an application of pressure on Serbia by political and military support for Serbia's neighbors: Albania; Hungary; and Bulgaria.⁶⁷ Roskin argues that providing political and military aid to these countries in a highly visible manner could dissuade Serbian action in Kosovo, the Vojvodina, and Macedonia.

Battlefield Isolation is similar to Roskin's approach. Collins describes it mainly as an "arms length" action which the allies could take to isolate the Balkan battlegrounds from all outside assistance, thereby assisting the U.N. in its sanction enforcement duties.⁶⁸ This approach requires the close cooperation of the former Yugoslavia's neighbors: Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, and Romania.

Sabrina Ramet proposes the employment of countervailing force under U.N. aegis to impose an effective sea, land, and air blockade and to conduct surgical air strikes against bridges, hydroelectric plants, army depots, arms factories and selected farms. She also urges lifting the ban on weapons shipments to Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, and Macedonia. These actions would be sufficient to tilt the balance in Croatia's and Bosnia's favor.⁶⁹

Other indirect approaches include the stricter enforcement of the U.N. resolutions concerning the no-fly zone, a halt to arms and other supplies reaching Serbia via the Danube River, and an enhancement of current peacekeeping efforts.

The direct approach commits a multinational military force, including ground troops, to the conflict areas. NATO forces are the most logical multinational force which could be committed within this scenario. NATO forces include both American and European units. These units are well trained. Many are already in the area as part of the Standing Naval Force Mediterranean in the Adriatic Sea and as part of the UNPROFOR in Bosnia and Croatia. In fact a considerable number of the 20,000+ U.N. soldiers from 23 nations currently on duty in the former Yugoslavia are NATO troops. NATO represents a toolbox of military capabilities able to deal with the Yugoslavian crisis if it were ordered to do so.

What exactly could a multinational force such as NATO be ordered to do in Bosnia and the Krajina? Collins, in Balkan Battlegrounds, suggests two courses of action: Peace Enforcement and Rollback. Peace enforcement requires the intervening military force to separate the combatants who are engaged in hostilities. Rollback consists of operations to rid Bosnia-Herzegovina of all intruders and restore its prewar boundaries.⁷⁰ The size of the force required to accomplish either of these missions is very large. Former Secretary of State Eagleburger estimated between two divisions and a full

field army. Over the past year, it has not been uncommon to hear figures in the 200,000 to 300,000 range as necessary to do the job.

The commitment of a multinational force to the region would probably be able to effect a cessation of hostilities, at least in the short term. The indirect approach would necessarily take longer to achieve this goal, but its cost in lives and materiel would be tolerable. The direct approach has the potential to cost a great deal of lives and materiel, with no guarantee that it will be achieved quickly.

Military intervention by a multinational force in former Yugoslavia poses a number of significant risks to long term goal accomplishment. First, such military operations will bring considerably more destruction and devastation to the area than it is currently experiencing. This could embitter the population to such a degree that negotiations may prove impossible. Second, a cessation of hostilities does not necessarily imply that the troops will be sent home quickly. It is most probable that some sort of peacekeeping force will be needed in the region for an indefinite period. This may lead to a false perception of stability.

The fourth scenario reflects the current situation: negotiate while the fighting continues. Within this scenario the international community will negotiate with the significant parties to arrive at a cessation of hostilities in Bosnia and Croatia and to set the stage for broader negotiations designed to improve stability in the entire area. This scenario has been

attempted three times since March 1992. None have met their objectives.

The European Community brokered the March, 1992 Lisbon Conference which produced a proposal, initially acceptable to all parties, which included dividing Bosnia into three ethnic or national units. Each national unit was to have local responsibility for a portion of the state's 109 municipalities. According to the E.C. proposal, 52 municipalities would be Muslim; 37 would be Serb; 20, Croatian. All three ethnic groups agreed to guarantee political and religious freedom and to respect minority rights within their units. Each national unit would establish a bicameral parliament wherein each ethnic group would have equal representation. National units were to assume responsibility for their own trade, economic decisions, education, police and social security policies. The central government's responsibility would extend to foreign, economic, and defense policies.⁷¹ Lord Carrington noted that all parties understood these three national units would not be geographical entities and would not comprise distinct self-contained blocks. Rather all parties accepted the set of principles above which allowed a great deal of autonomy to each national group within a federal arrangement.⁷²

It is unfortunate that Serbia then reacted violently to Bosnia's declaration of independence. A year of war not only has shelved the Lisbon proposal but also has prevented the development of an acceptable solution. In August the combatants, especially the Serbs, refused to accept a new plan

developed in London. The Vance-Owen plan has not fared much better. As of 28 March 1993, while all three combatants accept the first Vance-Owen provision that no states will be created within the state of Bosnia, only the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats have endorsed the second provision which divides Bosnia into ten enclaves. Both also have accepted the Vance-Owen plan for interim government arrangements for Bosnia. The Serbs continue to be the stumbling block to effective and serious negotiations.

The United States endorsement of the E.C./ U.N. negotiating process, without actual endorsement of the Vance-Owen plan, strengthens international resolve to find a negotiated solution to the conflict. Secretary of State Warren Christopher made it quite clear that "the only way to end this conflict is through negotiation. No settlement can be imposed upon the parties both on grounds of principle and on grounds that an imposed settlement would be far more difficult to sustain than one that the parties have voluntarily reached."⁷³

The U.S. entry into the negotiating process has had some unfortunate short term effects, however. First, the U.S. position has done little to convince the Muslims that Vance-Owen represents their best solution. Bosnian Muslim leaders still hope for increased military support for their effort, if not from the West then from the East. Second, U.S. commitment to a negotiated solution without military intervention has prompted Serbs and Croats to consolidate and extend their

control over Muslim populated areas of the republic. Serbs and Croats not only are attempting to ethnically cleanse Muslims from those areas destined to become Serb or Croat under the Vance-Owen plan. They also are expelling Muslims from territory designated to be Muslim in order to add these lands to their respectively designated regions.⁷⁴

The mid-term effect, however, may be more positive. For negotiations to succeed the Serbs must be made to realize that the international community is serious about the expeditious cessation of hostilities and the eventual return of stability to the region. The U.S. entry into the negotiations should signal that message to the Serbian leadership. Previously, President Bush made that message loud and clear in his private letter to Milosevic in December, warning of U.S. intervention should the Serbs attack Kosovo. Referring to the Bush letter, former Secretary of State Eagleberger stated recently that "If in fact anything had happened we were prepared to do what we had said - that I promise you."⁷⁵

Milosevic's actions in Geneva on 12 January 1993 may be an indication that he did understand the U.S. position. He literally forced Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic to reverse his public position and accept the Geneva peace plan. A Yugoslav delegate to the peace conference commented that Milosevic and Cosic put tremendous pressure on Karadzic. " They told him that there was a knife at his throat. They told him that he could expect no help from Serbia for his Bosnian Serbs if he continued to reject the peace plan. They told him that if

the war continued, it would no longer be a classic war but a war in which the West would intervene, using weapons you can't even see." 76

In fact, similar pressure from Milosevic a year earlier had forced Milan Babic, leader of the Serbian Democratic Party of Krajina, to accept U.N. "special status" in Krajina rather than force its desire for self-determination and independence from Croatia. Babic bristled at Milosevic's apparent policy reversal and commented that: "Mr. Milosevic told me that only Serbia ...had the chance of being a state, and that all the rest will be swallowed up by darkness. I was astonished at...how he could so offhandedly allow a large portion of the Serbian ethnic territory outside the Republic of Serbia to slip into oblivion." 77

The international community prefers to solve the Bosnian crisis, and potential future crises, through negotiations. Negotiations can succeed if all of the combatants agree to a settlement and promise to abide by that settlement. The international community, most likely consisting of a combination of the U.N. and the E.C. or C.S.C.E., not only will have to play a decisive role in the negotiating process but also will have to guarantee that settlement by force if necessary and perhaps for a very long period of time. This is critical to the success of any plan designed to improve long term stability in the region. Admiral Jeremy M. Boorda, the senior NATO commander for Southern Europe, has stated that NATO's preliminary plans call for sending 64,000 mostly

mechanized infantry troops to Bosnia for such a peacekeeping mission, but not until the combatants sign on to the U.N. negotiated peace plan.⁷⁸

Serbia and the various Serbian factions constitute the greatest threat to successful negotiations. If the Serbs refuse to participate seriously in the peace process, then the international community may have to link stronger indirect, and perhaps direct, intervention steps to the negotiation process. U.S. Bosnian policy promises to tighten the enforcement of economic sanctions and to step up political pressure on Serbia. The Milosevic government already faces an economic disaster at home. More international economic and political pressure could weaken him while strengthening some of the more moderate and democratic forces within the FRY.

Increasing direct intervention would also convince the Serbians of the seriousness of international resolve. Strict no-fly zone enforcement could complement a complete supply embargo of the Adriatic and the Danube. Continued Serbian violence and aggression could be met with selected bombing of Serbian military targets and targets in Serbia supporting their military effort. If the Serbians threaten the safety of UNPROFOR troops performing either humanitarian or peacekeeping duties, then the rules of engagement could be changed to allow them to respond properly.

The intent of these actions must be to get the Serbs to negotiate. The Serbs will only negotiate when they are convinced that continued fighting will not improve their

position. The only way to have peace is to force a stalemate, states the president of Turkey, Turgut Ozal. "Remember Croatia! It was when there was a balance of power that the war then stopped."⁷⁹ As the Serbs improve their cooperation, these sanctions could then be relaxed.

Of the four scenarios presented in this section, the one which offers the most likelihood of success is the fourth option: negotiate while the fighting continues. The entry of the U.S. into the negotiating process significantly enhances that processes' credibility. While the negotiations continue, the U.N. should also step up the intensity of the existing sanctions and should consider implementing others as well, such as increased diplomatic isolation of Serbia and the initiation of some of the steps discussed above. The negotiating process must succeed in halting the fighting before the international community can begin the quest for long term regional stability.

Improving Long-term Stability

When the multi-ethnic state of Yugoslavia disintegrated, new multi-ethnic states quickly replaced it. These events forced the international community to answer several complex and troublesome questions. Under what conditions can a state-to-be secede from another legally recognized state? What entity has the right to secede, the territorial unit or the nation, or nations, living within? Is the self-determination

of states or of nations the proper pretext? What criteria must new entities meet to receive recognition as states? Are there other alternatives to statehood for those entities or groups which simply could not survive as states? The answers, or proposed answers, to these questions have a direct impact on the improvement of long-term stability in the former Yugoslav region.

The international community's *de facto* recognition of Slovenian, Croatian, and Bosnian independence provided several answers very quickly, too quickly, in fact, for many. All three former republics seceded because of the worsening politico-economic situation in the FRY resulting from Milosevic's Serbian nationalist program. All three were legal territorial republics in the FRY. All three used the principle of the self-determination as their pretext for secession. Croatia and Slovenia appear to have based their claim for independence on the principle of self-determination of nations.⁸⁰

Bosnia appears to have based its claim on the principle of self-determination of peoples within a state.⁸¹ Since 1960, general international practice had recognized the principle of self-determination as "the right to freedom from a former colonial power" and as the right to "independence of the whole state's population from foreign intervention or influence."⁸²

In addition, general international practice had not recognized the right of a given minority group or other group to have any right to secede from a legally recognized state.⁸³

Considering its actions toward the former Yugoslav republics,

the international community appears to have endorsed new precedents in both the principle of self-determination and the right of secession.

Conversely, the international community's refusal to recognize the independence of Kosovo, Serbian Krajina, Herceg-Bosnia, or the Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina clearly sends an additional message. It simply is not practical or possible for every ethnic group or nation to form its own state. The international community will not, at this point, endorse or support the self-determination of ethnic groups or nations.

Who or what, then, is entitled to seek statehood? James Crawford lists a number of statehood criteria in his book, The Creation of States In International Law.⁸⁴ All states must possess some defined territory. Within that territory must reside a permanent population whose nationality is not relevant to the issue of statehood. This legally created unit is independent from other states. Most importantly, the state must have a government which is able to control its territory and to maintain a degree of law and order within its boundaries. In other words, it must be both willing and able to guarantee its internal integrity. Of equal importance, since states are relatively permanent creations which have been recognized by the international community and which agree to abide by international law, the international community must be willing and able to guarantee the state's right to exist. States are sovereign as a result of their statehood, giving them an

omnipotence in reference to their internal and external affairs.

Crawford's statehood criteria do not consider ethnicity a reason for state creation. His criteria recognize that states must have populations, but those populations need not be of the same ethnic group or nation. In fact very few states are nation-states, or polities " whose territorial and juridicial frontiers coincide with the ethnic boundaries of the national entity with which that state is identified, frequently by its very name."⁸⁵ In addition to being few, nation-states may not be all that desirable. The desire to concentrate a homogeneous population within a defined territory makes human rights violations and minority repression more likely to occur than plurality and minority tolerance.⁸⁶

Most states are multi-ethnic. The United States represents perhaps the most successful multi-ethnic state. In the U.S. many ethnic groups have been virtually assimilated into a generic American nationality. Multi-ethnic states in Western Europe, the Americas, and Africa have also had varying degrees of success. Multi-ethnic states in Eastern Europe and the Balkans have not. In the former Yugoslavia ethnic identity is inviolable. Despite Yugoslavia's seventy-two year existence, for example, only 5.4 % of the population considered themselves Yugoslavs.⁸⁷ Yugoslavia's attempt at ethnic group assimilation into a greater nationality was a failure.

If the international community will not recognize the right of every ethnic nation to create its own state, it will

have to assist many nations to live together within the same state. The question is how can this be accomplished without creating an unstable situation? One solution is to grant "less-than-sovereign self-determination" to ethnic nations. "Less-than-sovereign self-determination" is a method of administrative decentralization short of secession or political independence which permits an ethnic minority or nation to redress its grievances against its state.⁸⁸

Autonomy is an example of "less-than-sovereign self-determination" which can creatively deal with minority/majority rights conflicts before they enter a violent, secessionist stage. Autonomy ranges in degrees from partial to complete. A nation or territory enjoying complete autonomy would have freedom to use its language, practice its culture, operate its own educational institutions in its native language, publish and manage its own communications media, control its natural resources, create and staff its own judiciary and local government organs, participate in those aspects of national government which directly affect their nation, and politically control the territory wherein the nation resides.

Various ethnic groups have proposed autonomy concepts having direct applicability to their nation. Dr. Sandor Hodi, leader of the Democratic Community of Vojvodina Hungarians (DZVM), developed the concept of tripartite autonomy. The tripartite concept is actually a combination of three forms of autonomy: personal, which deals with the areas of culture,

education, and information; territorial, which provides for a special status for opstinas (districts) where Hungarians are in a majority; and local self-rule, which applies to residents of dispersed towns and villages.⁸⁹ Under tripartite autonomy, an autonomous Vojvodina would remain part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Tripartite autonomy enjoys more than just the wide support of the Hungarians in the Vojvodina. During the Serbian elections held on 20 December 1992, chairman of the Democratic Union of Vojvodina Hungarians(VMDK), Andras Agoston, noted that this autonomy concept was a well known goal of the VDMK. Even though Hungarians make up only 3.2% of the population of the FRY, Hungarian representatives won 3.6% of the votes indicating broad Hungarian, and some other nation, support for the concept.⁹⁰

Serbia favors territorial autonomy for those enclaves of Serbs living outside of Serbia proper. Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic has stated insistently that the Bosnian Serbs must have their own territory in Bosnia, and that Bosnia should be divided into three autonomous regions, one for each ethnic group. "We want our sovereignty, our freedom, our autonomy in the sense of independence on our territory, without which I think there can be no question of sovereignty for the people," he said.⁹¹ One of the major reasons Karadzic initially agreed to the Vance-Owen plan was that it recognized all three

constituent nations of Bosnia and that it organized the ten provinces according to the principle of ethnicity, which located state power in provincial territory.⁹²

The Albanian Macedonians support "a modern type of autonomy" wherein all nations are constituents of the state. They are basically interested in freedom, equality, open borders, free flow of people, goods, money and ideas. This autonomy advocates that every citizen of the republic, including Macedonian Muslims, independently decide on their national and other identity.⁹³ This closely parallels personal autonomy.

In fact personal autonomy is not such a new concept. Prior to the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after World War I, Karl Renner and Otto Bauer, two Austrian-Marxists, wrote several works which captured the meaning of the personal principle of autonomy, or extra-territoriality. Renner and Bauer were well aware of the problems which beset the multi-ethnic Austro-Hungarian Empire. They were also well aware that the Empire would never survive unless its multi-ethnic groups could coexist peacefully within its boundaries.

To Renner, the state was an organic entity, the individual its basic building block. Individuals in an organized society who shared common characteristics, such as language and culture, with other members of that society generally belonged to the same ethnic group or nation. Many such nations coexisted within the multi-national state's territorial boundaries. Problems often arose when ethnic group

boundaries did not correspond to the governmental entity's territorial boundaries.

Renner's solution to this problem employed two principles of autonomy: the territorial and the personal. The territorial principle granted autonomy to a territory wherein the residents were of basically the same ethnic group. The personal principle of autonomy granted autonomy to the ethnic or national group itself, regardless of where members of the group resided. Of course ethnic group intermixing, or interdigitizing, was very common in multi-ethnic states, leaving few ethnically pure areas.

In such states, Renner advocated the creation of a new national branch of government to supplement the existing administrative structure, which itself would need modified. Renner commented: "We must put a double network on the map, an economic and an ethnic one. We must cut across the functions of the state. We must separate national and political affairs, we must organize the population twice, once nationally and once according to administrative requirements....In either case the territorial units will be different."⁹⁴

This national branch of government would deal exclusively with all aspects of the resident nations' cultural life. Each citizen would declare his chosen nationality, enter his name on a national list or register, and become a member of a "national association."⁹⁵ Each national association would have jurisdiction over the education, schools, language usage, and cultural affairs of its particular ethnic group and could not

be interfered with by any other national association or the state government. A supreme court of arbitration would settle any controversies between national associations.⁹⁶

Renner favored a federal government to perform the state's social, economic, military and foreign affairs functions.⁹⁷ A federal government "separates what is separated by nature, and gives the separate part the necessary autonomy, yet at the same time takes care of the organic relations and the harmonious incorporation of the single parts into the whole."⁹⁸

Local administrative units would be formed at the municipality and the district level. All residents of the local administrative unit would participate in its governmental functions, chiefly socio-economic. Local administrative units could be homogeneous or multi-ethnic, but this really did not matter since this unit would deal with issues of importance to all citizens. They would not deal with any cultural matters. At the federal or supreme state level elected or appointed representatives of the national associations and the local administrative units would cooperate in the government in a proportional manner which would insure equal representation.⁹⁹

Renner and Bauer's objective was to eliminate disputes between ethnic groups in those very volatile areas of language, education, and culture. They knew a system based on the territorial principle would be unsuccessful because territorial autonomy stated that: "if you live on my territory, you are

subject to my rule, my language. It is the expression of domination, not of equality, of force, not of right.¹⁰⁰ A system based on cultural autonomy would eliminate these disputes among nations.

Cultural autonomy's success depended on the idea of proportional representation. Quoting Renner, Theodor Hanf writes that proportional representation "will break down all nations into analogous groups" causing political parties to form "on the basis of economic programs," with the result that in all nations "the same groups will be fighting the same fight" and "on the same front."¹⁰¹

Several societies have attempted to reduce conflict potential with varied forms of cultural autonomy. Hanf uses the following examples: the millet system of the Ottoman Empire; the Arab minorities in Israel; Lebanon; the Netherlands; and Indonesia. Despite each having problems unique to their situation, Hanf still concludes that cultural autonomy "based on the personality principle can be applied as different forms of conflict regulation to fulfill different functions," such as providing a sort of equilibrium while the state transforms to adversarial democracy, or in general reducing the potential for conflict.¹⁰²

All of the societies created in the wake of Yugoslavia's demise represent fertile ground for the application of Renner's personal principle of autonomy. Slovenia, with 90% of its population Slovenian, is the only new state whose population approaches homogeneity. All other state populations are

intermixed. Not all are ready to accept the principle, however. Serbs have so dominated the FRY that minority rights have significantly decreased. Violence in Bosnia has been so debilitating that, even after the killing ceases, it will take some time for the populations to accept living next to each other again. This is similarly true in Croatia. Only Macedonia, with minorities comprising over one third of its population, offers a possible test case scenario and, perhaps, a model for the region.

Several factors make this possible. First, there is bipartisan support among the Macedonian leadership to resolve their problems peacefully and within the framework of the current government. After a meeting with Albanian President Berisha, the president of Macedonia, Kiro Gligorov stated that negotiation, dialogue, and the establishment of more democratic and parliamentary institutions could solve all of Macedonia's current problems.¹⁰³ Muhamed Halili, coordinator of the Albanian deputies group in the Macedonia Assembly, believes that the situation in Macedonia can be solved without any socio-political conflict and fully supports the creation of a Macedonian state for all of its citizens.¹⁰⁴

Second, the existing government structure composed of a coalition of several parties sharing parliamentary responsibility already comprises a multi-party system representing a variety of ethnic interests.¹⁰⁵ Since no party has attained a political majority enabling the formation of a majority government, Macedonia considers itself to be " a

government of experts" under a presidential regime.¹⁰⁶

Albanian representation in the government includes a deputy prime minister, four ministries, and 120 delegates to the assembly.¹⁰⁷

Third, the Macedonian government has already experienced a number of successes. The Yugoslav Army withdrew from Macedonia without major incident. Government dialogue is defusing the inter-ethnic problem between Albanians and Macedonians. There have been few stories about the violation of any groups' human rights. Finally, in the interest of having its independence recognized as quickly as possible, Macedonia has been accepting world standards with "the maximum possible speed."¹⁰⁸

Fourth, Macedonia, Albania and the E.C. have been engaged in trilateral discussions since June 1992 in The Hague. The discussions resulted from Albanian complaints concerning their treatment in Macedonia, and addressed human rights, rights of ethnic groups, and the special status of autonomous regions.¹⁰⁹ Two points are significant. The discussions addressed important issues, including changes to the Macedonian Constitution, use of the Albanian language, problems related to education, information, and the special status of Albanians in Macedonia.¹¹⁰ They also addressed potential solutions, including amendments to the Macedonian Constitution and international assistance.¹¹¹ German Ambassador Gert Arens concluded that the Albanian problems and demands could be solved within the framework of the Constitution and that

Macedonia has conditions suitable for resolving its problems in a civilized and cultural manner.¹¹²

Macedonia therefore could become a model for the solution of multi-ethnic problems. Macedonian concern for peaceful problem resolution and their current initiatives with the E.C. are important signals which those interested in long term stability in the region should not overlook. The 682 U.N. troops expected to man observation posts on Macedonia's borders with Serbia and Albania also represent a welcome step towards insuring Macedonian independence will develop without external interference.

The U.N. should continue its involvement by taking the following additional steps: extend international recognition and U.N. membership to Macedonia; guarantee its existence by the deploying a peacekeeping force if necessary; support and assist Macedonia's establishment of a governmental system based on the personal principle of autonomy, and invite other states in the region to participate in the process as well so that they can employ similar strategies in their own states. .

Conclusions

The former Yugoslavia hosts several crises which must be resolved before regional stability can improve. Paramount, of course, is the immediate cessation of hostilities in both Bosnia and the Krajina. Serious U.N. brokered negotiations while the fighting continues, buttressed by increasingly more

restrictive sanctions against uncooperative belligerents such as Serbia, must continue until the fighting ceases. Once the fighting has stopped, defusing the potentially explosive situations in Kosovo, the Sandzak, the Vojvodina, and Macedonia can proceed in earnest.

While the international community has apparently guaranteed the right of republics or states to exercise their right of self-determination to secede from a internationally recognized state which is in the process of disintegration, it has not endorsed the same rights for ethnic or other groups. Unless a statehood-seeking entity can demonstrate that it will be viable, both internally and externally as a member of the international community, it appears unlikely that the international community will recognize it. Therefore international recognition will not be extended to the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosnia, the Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Hercegovina, Serbian Krajina or Kosovo. Recognition eventually will be extended to Macedonia as soon as the name issue is settled, however, because it has met all E.C. and U.N. standards for statehood.

The principle of territorial autonomy also does not appear to offer many solutions, due to the intermixing of many nations in all states. The most troublesome problem here is, of course, Serbian territorial expansion. The U.N., the E.C., and the C.S.C.E must convince the Serbs that they will not be

permitted to establish a greater Serbia nor will they be allowed to create illegal Serb states out of their neighbors' territory.

The U.N., the E.C., and the C.S.C.E. must take bold steps now in order to convince the Serbs that they must negotiate an end to the fighting. The U.N. must immediately sanction the positioning of a strong NATO force in Macedonia in order to secure its border with Serbia. Second, the U.N. must totally support the stated policy of the U.S. which calls for swift military action against Serbs in Kosovo and in Serbia proper if Serbia mounts any military aggression against Kosovo. Third, the U.N. must immediately consent to enforce the no-fly zone over Bosnia and must lift the arms embargo against Bosnia and Croatia. Fourth, the U.N. must establish a deadline, similar to that given to Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War, which requires the Serbs to cease hostilities. If the Serbs fail to respond positively, the U.N. must authorize air strikes and punitive raids against key Serbian military and military-related activities, especially those interfering with humanitarian aid. Fifth, the U.N. must secure Sarajevo, quiet military action around Sarajevo, and then use Sarajevo as the center around which to build a new Bosnia.

Having thus gotten the Serbs to cease fighting, the next step would be to get all of the combatants to negotiate a settlement which will restore peace and stability. There is no question that a significant peacekeeping force will be required in Bosnia while this is occurring. The NATO plan for 64,000

troops has already been discussed. So too has the NATO force recommended for placement in Macedonia. The objectives of these forces is to insure that the fighting does not flare up again, and that any agreement reached during negotiations is given every possible opportunity for implementation and success. These forces must be prepared to be in position for an indefinite period, or until a regional peace and stability plan such as the one which I recommend in this paper is tried and either certified or discredited.

Renner and Bauer's principle of personal autonomy offers many potential solutions to problems indigenous to multi-ethnic states. Every nation in the former Yugoslavia considers the preservation of their cultures of critical concern. Their model provides for this within a federal framework.

Macedonia is in the unique position of possibly becoming a model for multi-ethnic problem solution. It acknowledges the importance of culture and the importance of all citizens working together to peacefully solve their problems. The international community must provide the required support and assistance to prove that cultural autonomy will work. It must also be prepared to compel uncooperative groups, by force if necessary, to accept a solution based on cultural autonomy, if cultural autonomy becomes the basis for the negotiated settlement.

International involvement is essential for creating and then guaranteeing successful solutions. The United Nations and the European Community must provide their expertise during all

phases of negotiations and discussions. The United States must participate as well.

The principle of personal or cultural autonomy offers a viable solution to many of the current crises in the former Yugoslavia. If successfully implemented, it could be a major factor in improving long term stability in the Balkans.

ENDNOTES

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- ³¹ "Poll Results on Croatia's Policy on Bosnia," FBIS-EEU, 15 October 1992, p. 43.
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- ³⁷ Robert M. Hayden, "Constitutional Nationalism in the Former Yugoslav Republics" (Slavic Review, Vol. 51, No.4, Winter 1992), p.657.
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⁴¹ Ibid., p.39.

⁴² Ibid., p.27.

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